

University of Delaware Provost Dr. Robin Morgan honored for service to agriculture



Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse presents Dr. Robin Morgan with the 2019 Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service to Delaware Agriculture.

Dover, Del. — Dr. Robin Morgan was recognized Thursday evening at the 48th Delaware Agricultural Industry Dinner with the Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service to Delaware Agriculture for her commitment to agriculture through education, research, and encouraging the next generation of agriculturalists.

"I didn't always understand agriculture. I was a molecular biologist," said University of Delaware Provost Dr. Robin Morgan. "Somewhere along the way, I started caring so much about the people who raise food and the people who think about what this country needs and what the world needs. I got changed. I thought about what it really means to feed people and that we are what we eat and we are what we drink, and the

value of all the things people do.”

Dr. Morgan was noted as encouraging the next generation of agriculturalists. She has made a difference in the lives of young people from 4-H to middle and high school agriscience students to the college students who she interacts with on a daily basis. She has earned numerous awards reflecting her commitment to youth, including the Honorary American Degree awarded by the National FFA Organization.

Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse recalled when Delmarva had the misfortune of having avian influenza in 2004 – a poultry disease never seen before in the United States. “Dr. Morgan asked what we were going to need to eradicate the virus, knowing what the economic impact of this devastating disease would mean to agriculture. I laid out everything we needed to combat it and she was ready to help,” said Scuse. “I remember asking Robin if she needed to get permission first [from the University]. She didn’t quiver in her offer and told me that she would worry about that later, let’s get done what we need to do.” Scuse attributed her can-do attitude and quick action as the main reason the disease was quickly squashed and did not spread to other farms, setting an example for national and international response to avian influenza.



U.S. Senator Tom Carper, Delaware Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse, and U.S. Senator Chris Coons congratulate

Dr. Robin Morgan on her award.

There have been many changes in the agriculture industry since Dr. Morgan joined the University of Delaware as an assistant professor in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. Farmers are producing more food with less land. Computers have gotten smaller and precision agriculture is assisting farmers with production. Students are no longer going to college to learn husbandry and crop production – they are learning skills to use in brand-new careers in agriculture that did not even exist when Morgan began her career in 1985.

From her time as an assistant professor to full professor to dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources to now serving as the provost, Dr. Morgan has been able to witness these changes. She has been instrumental in moving education forward at UD in order to help students be employable after graduation in an agriculture-related field.

Morgan shared that even with all the positions she has taken on at the University, “that my heart is still in agriculture.”

The Agricultural Industry Dinner, in its 48th year, was attended by more than 400 people, including farmers, business leaders and elected officials. It is sponsored by the Delaware Council of Farm Organizations.

Past recipients of the Secretary’s Award include: Fifer Orchards (2018); brothers Richard and Keith Carlisle of Greenwood (2017); former MidAtlantic Farm Credit senior vice-president Kenny Bounds (2016); Farm Service Agency official Robin Talley (2015); Schiff Farms of Harrington (2015); farmers Laura Hill of Lewes and Barbara Sapp of Milton (2014); dairy farmer Walter C. Hopkins Sr. of Lewes (2013); then U.S. Department of Agriculture Under Secretary Michael Scuse, a former Delaware secretary of agriculture (2012); Delmarva Farmer Senior Editor Bruce Hotchkiss (2012); James Baxter of

Georgetown (2011); brothers David, Ed and Robert Baker of Middletown (2010); Bill Vanderwende of Bridgeville (2009); and Ed Kee of Lincoln (2008).

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